

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A center break switch comprising:

A a base;

a pair of switch blades, each having a switch contact and each mounted on the base by a rotatable support structure combined with an operating mechanism that moves the switch blades and their contacts between closed and open positions upon application of a motive force to the operating mechanism, each switch blade also having a line terminal;

the support structure and operating mechanism being related for rotation of each blade's support structure proximate the base with resulting movement of the blades and contacts arcuately between the closed and open positions; and

a pair of pry bars, each of the pair being attached to one of the blades proximate the contact and with the bars arranged with to have facing ends to that work pivotally against each other during at least part of a switch opening operation of the operating mechanism to facilitate opening of the contacts.

2. (Currently amended) The switch of claim 1 where:

the pair of pry bars, at their abutting facing ends, are located, relative to the contacts on the blades, opposite the direction of movement of the contacts during switch opening.

3. (Currently amended) The switch of claim 1 in a combination further comprising:

two additional center break switches each with pairs a pair of switch blades and related contacts, a pair

of pry bars, each of the pair being attached to one of the blades proximate the contact with the bars arranged to have facing ends that work pivotally against each other during at least part of a switch opening operation of the operating mechanism to facilitate opening of the contacts, a pair of line terminals and a pair of support structures, arranged like those of the first mentioned switch, with each of the three pairs of blades of the three switches being connectable at their line terminals to a respective phase of a three-phase electrical system; and

the an operating mechanism for all three pairs of switch blades is arranged includes elements joined together for common operation of all three switches by a single source of motive power.

4. (Original) The combination of claim 3 where:  
the operating mechanism includes a manual operator or a motor operator.

5. (Original) The switch of claim 1 where:  
the switch contacts engage each other with sliding friction during a period of movement of the switch blades from the closed to open positions.

6. (Original) The switch of claim 5 further comprising:

a contact tightening mechanism that allows adjusting the pressure on the contacts in the closed position to a desired amount.

7. (Original) The switch of claim 5 where:  
the contacts, at least in part, have a configuration with mutual engagement in a plane substantially the same as that in which the arcuate movement of the blades occurs.

8. (Currently amended) The switch of claim 5 where:

the support structure of each blade is insulative and extends a length from the base with an axis of rotation running along the length; and

~~the axes of the pair of blade support structures are either substantially parallel to each other or are substantially in a V configuration with the bottom of the V located at the base of the switch.~~

9. (Original) The switch of claim 8 where:

the pry bars each comprise a rigid member secured to the respective blades so extremities of the bars face each other in the fully closed position of the switch contacts and mechanically engage as a pivot axis for a time during which the contacts engage with sliding friction.

10. (Original) The switch of claim 9 where:

the bars are secured to the blades at locations for attachment of additional elements for arc suppression.

11. (Original) The switch of claim 9 where:

the bars are of metal and are shaped and are attached to the blades with space avoiding any direct contact to the switch contacts and with a small gap, in the fully closed position, avoiding direct contact to each other.

12. (Original) The switch of claim 11 where:

the bars each have a flange-like portion at the extremities.

13. (Original) The switch of claim 9 where:

the bars, at least the extremities thereof, are insulative and are arranged with either a small gap or no gap between them in the closed position.

14. (Currently amended) The switch of claim 9 where:

the bars are plate-like members ~~with the extremities~~ substantially parallel to the plane of arcuate movement of the switch blade; and

the extremities of the plate-like members each have a corner edge, on the side thereof away from the contacts, that engage to provide the pivot axis.

15. (Cancelled)

16. (Currently amended) The switch of claim ~~15~~ 20 where:

the elements of the fulcrum mechanism ~~comprises~~ comprise a pair of bars respectively attached to the ~~a~~ pair of contact blades and the bars engage each other and together form a pivot axis to provide the prying action as the switch contacts slide against each other ~~during the switch opening in the partly open position.~~

17. (Currently amended) The switch of claim ~~15~~ 20 where:

the contacts have frictional engagement during switch opening in a first plane in which the blades move during rotation of the supports or a second plane perpendicular to the first plane, or in both planes.

18. (Currently amended) The switch of claim ~~15~~ 16 where:

The the fulcrum mechanism comprises a pair of members respectively attached to each of the pair of contact blades.

19. (Currently amended) The switch of claim ~~15~~ 16 where:

the fulcrum mechanism comprises a pair of elements respectively integral with each of the pair of contact blades.

20. (New) A switch comprising:  
a pair of switch contacts;  
a pair of supports that each support one of the switch contacts;

a switch operating mechanism related with the contacts and their supports for relative motion of the contacts in an arcuate path including motion, in a switch opening, from a fully closed position in which the contacts are stationary and conductively engaged, through a partly open position in which the contacts have relative motion while conductively engaged with sliding friction, to an open position in which the contacts are separated; and

a fulcrum mechanism comprising elements, in addition to the switch contacts, located proximate to and behind the contacts in relation to the path of relative motion, that meet to provide a prying action increasing leverage to help overcome the sliding friction between the contacts in movement through the partly open position.

21. (New) The switch of claim 20 where:  
the elements of the fulcrum mechanism form a pivot axis that is substantially fixed in location while the contacts are engaged with sliding friction in the partly open position.